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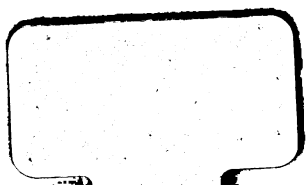
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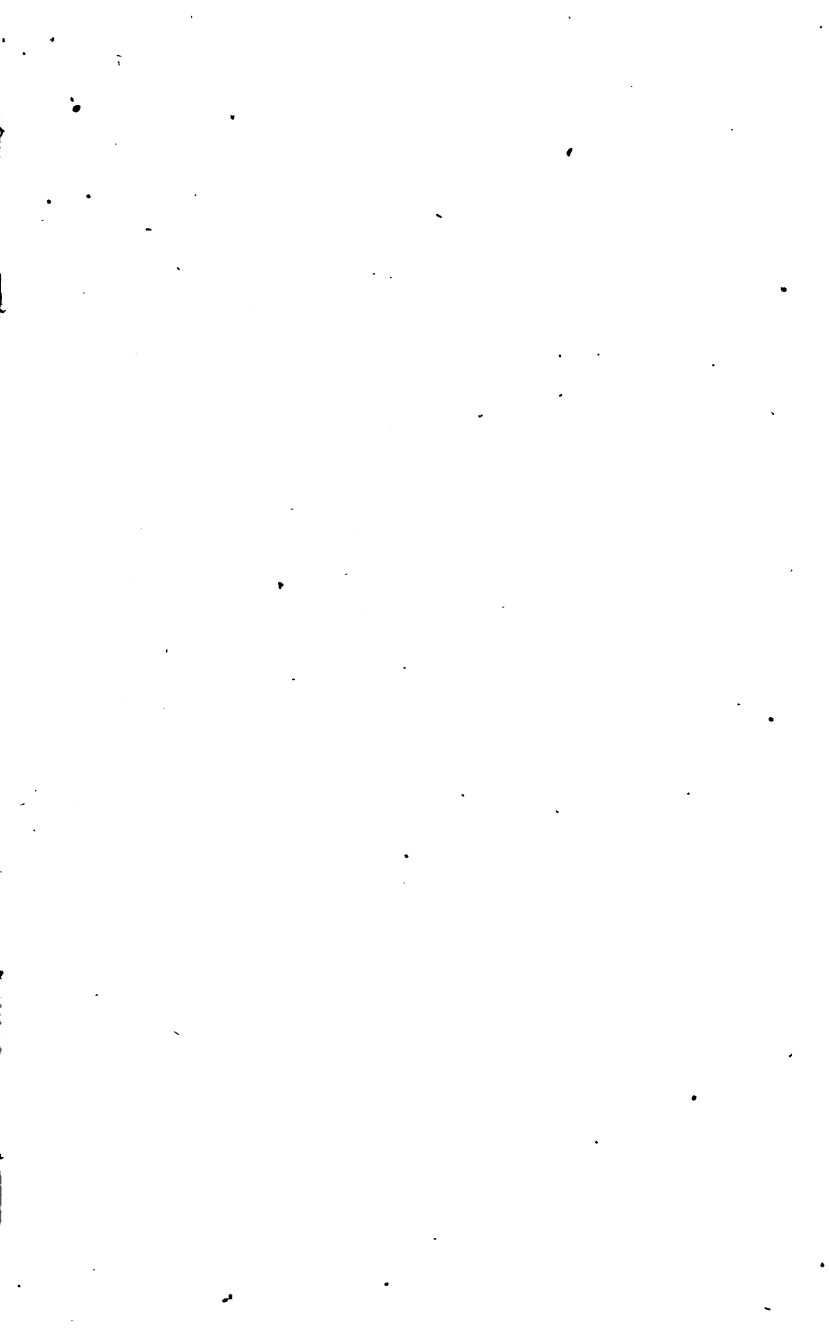
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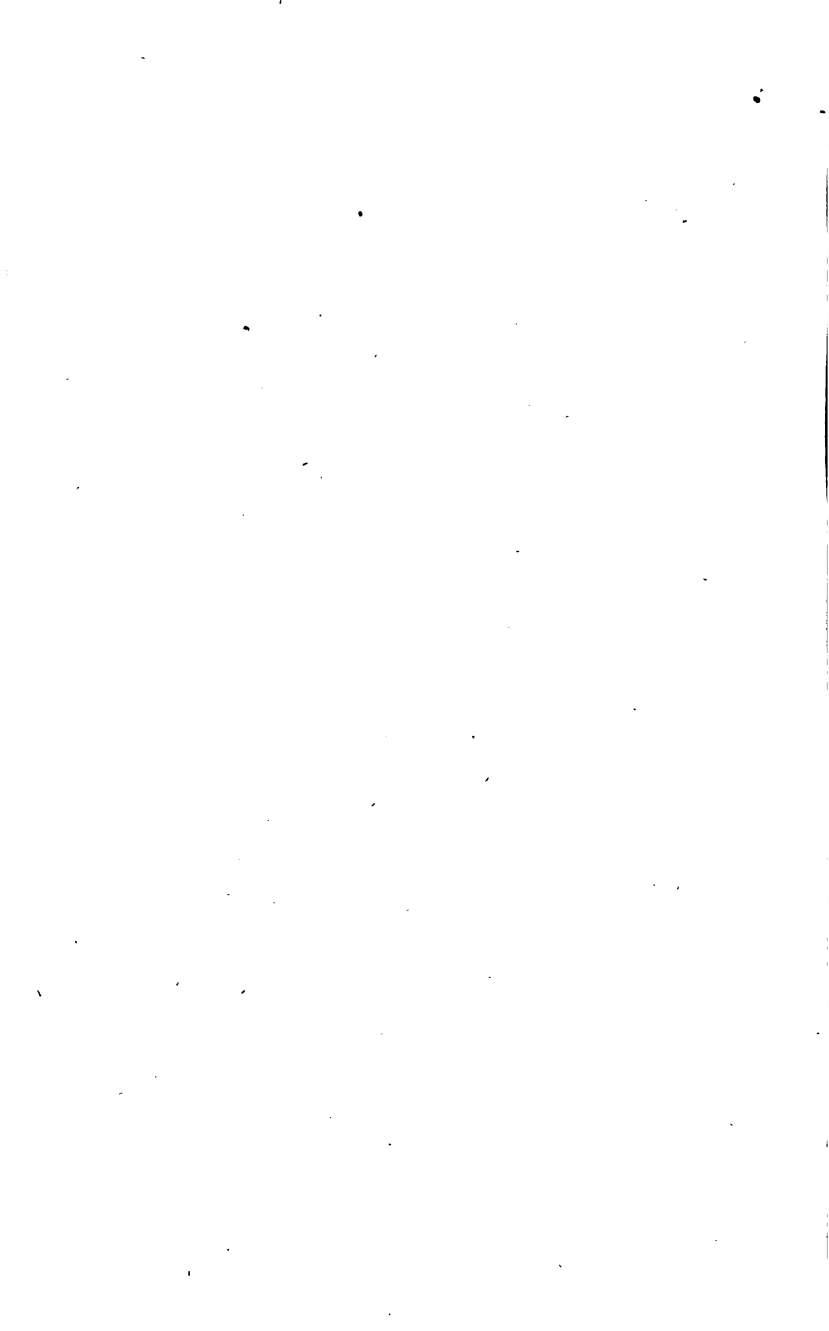


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COTTAGER'S RETURN.







THE  
COTTAGER'S RETURN;

OR,

A SURE WAY TO OBTAIN  
CONSTANT EMPLOYMENT  
AND HIGH WAGES.

.....  
REPUBLISHED FROM THE LONDON EDITION.  
.....

*DEDHAM, Mass.*  
PRINTED BY HERMAN MANN,  
COMMON-STREET.  
1838.



## PREFACE,

*By the present Publisher.*

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The following beautiful story was originally published in London, by a society for "Promoting Christian Knowledge and Charity," under the title of "*William's Return, or Good News for Cottagers.*" It has since been through several editions in this country, which have long since been exhausted. In presenting a new edition to the public, the present publisher is not actuated by pecuniary motives; but being impressed with the pleasing style in which it is written, and feeling confident that it is a work which is eminently calculated to please, as well as to produce good and lasting impressions on the minds



of its readers, he is anxious that it should be circulated far and wide ; and to facilitate this object, he offers them at such a low price as barely to defray the expense of publishing, which will thus render them of easy access to the poorest individual. He also hopes, that although small in size, it will be found large in merit, and rich in profit.

Should the reception of this little work be such as to warrant it, the publisher intends to continue a series of works of a similar character ; and he trusts that those interested in the spread of Virtue and Religion, will readily second his efforts to circulate such works as are calculated to aid its cause.

## COTTAGER'S RETURN.

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WILLIAM SEYMOUR was brought up to day labor, in a small village in one of the midland counties; he had for some time been absent from home, to the great loss of his mother, who had been seven years a widow; for, though she had three other children now able to maintain themselves, and do something for her, yet from idle habits and bad management, it was not without difficulty, that she procured the comforts of life, and they never had amongst them a single guinea beforehand. Her husband was a sober, honest, and industrious man, and while he lived, things went on tolerably well: but, instead of contributing her full share to the prosperity of her family by constant and active exertion, she contented herself with making and mending her own and the children's clothes, dressing their food, and keeping the house tolerably clean. She might, and ought to have done much more than this; for she could spin both wool and flax, and do many other things, which would have saved, and gained money: but she thought only of

living like the rest of the world, and made no attempt to be more notable than other women in her station.

Fortunately for the children, there was a good school in the village; and William, who took great delight in learning, could read well, and write a tolerable hand, before the death of their father took from them the means of further improvement: had he been properly encouraged, he might have greatly helped his brothers and sisters; but Sarah seldom called her children about the fire with their books in a winter evening, and on a Sunday, when they generally read a few chapters in the bible, she never tried to explain the meaning of it to them; indeed she knew little about it herself, seldom thinking of the contents, after she had closed the book: so that reading was to her rather an innocent than a useful employment.

She was naturally of a kind and gentle disposition, but had only that share of religion, which is so common; just enough to keep her from being worse than most other people, but too little to make her resolve to be better.

William was in his twenty-second year, when a relation of his father's who was a little older, called upon them in his way to visit a cousin, who lived at a considerable distance, in a country, which he described to be particularly desirable for active young men, as there was plenty of employment and the wages high. He easily prevailed upon William to accompany him; for he was of a lively disposition, and glad of an opportunity to see a little of the world. He had now been absent near eighteen months, and, though he had written several times to his mother,

none of his letters had reached her ; when one evening, as she was returning home alone from the neighboring town, she was, to her great joy, overtaken by him.

Nothing could be more kind and affectionate than their greeting, except that Sarah could not help mingling a few complaints of his long absence, with her rejoicings at his safe return. To these William replied in the tenderest manner : ‘ Dear mother, I own that I did wrong to leave you, but I hope the consequences of my journey will be most beneficial to you, to me, and to all our family : for I bring home with me, what, I trust, will make us all happy.’

‘ How is that, dear William,’ cried she, eagerly ; ‘ you cannot in this short time have gained money enough to maintain us, without working for the rest of our lives !’

‘ I have met with a friend,’ replied he, ‘ a real friend, who has brought me to the knowledge of one, who is both able and willing to do every thing for me, and for us all that we can possibly wish or desire.’

‘ This is great news indeed,’ cried she, ‘ I thought, when I first saw you, that you looked more kind, more happy than ever you had ever done before ; and it’s no wonder, since you have been so lucky. But tell me, my dear boy, who is this good gentleman, and where does he live ?’

‘ I will tell you all that at my leisure,’ returned William ; and, during the remainder of their walk, he asked a number of questions about the welfare and conduct of his brothers and sister, while he was away, which his mother was not able to answer much to their credit or his satisfaction.

‘Richard, you know,’ said she, ‘engaged himself a little before you went, to work with farmer Smith, and with him he still continues, getting large wages ; but what good does it do him ? he has taken of late to be very much with Tom White, who is become a mere sot ; and with him, to his own ruin and my heavy loss, he goes at least one evening in the week to the Bell, where he not only leaves half the money that he gets, but makes a brute of himself into the bargain ; and, when I talk to him about it, he flies out of the house, and will not hear what I have to say. I cannot describe to you, how miserable this makes me ; and I am sure, he is unhappy himself, for he has not half the lively good humour about him, that he used to have.’

‘I am truly concerned to hear this,’ replied William, ‘but I hope James and Mary still continue in their places, and are doing well.

‘They are both at home,’ cried Sarah, sorrowfully shaking her head. ‘James was with as good a master as ever lived, but it happened this year, that the races came, before the harvest was over ; and, as he had never been away from them, since he was able to walk to the course, (for you know I always loved to indulge my children) his master and he differed about his going ; one said, his corn must be got in, and the other would not stay at home to assist ; so they parted. But what is to me much worse than this, poor Mary had a longing desire to see a play in the race week, and, knowing that her mistress would not consent to her going, she went without asking leave, with the dairy-maid and coachman at the hall ; and, the matter being found out, she was immediately

dismissed, the lady declaring, that she would never keep a young woman in her house, who had so little sense of her duty, as to do what she knew her mistress disapproved; or so little regard to her own character, as to be out late at night without a father or a brother in her company. Perhaps I did wrong, in letting this poor girl go to all the diversions that were within her reach, while she was a child; it may have made it difficult for her to deny herself any pleasure now; but, be this as it may, her coming home was a great shock to me, for she had an excellent place, and we have not yet been able to hear of any other.'

By this time they were within sight of the cottage, which stood pleasantly on a little green bank near the road 'How is it,' cried William, as he approached, 'that our house looks less cheerful than it used to do?'

'I suppose,' replied Sarah, 'it is, because the kitchen window was so badly broken by Richard and his companion one night, when he stayed out so late, that James said he should not come in, and kept him some time at the door. To be sure, the boards that are nailed upon it look very dismal; and, when the weather is dark, Mary and I can hardly see to work by the fire. The garden, you see, is quite out of order; Richard used to love working in it night and morning with you, but now he neglects it, and I have no heart to do any thing.'

They now arrived at the door, where James and Mary met them, and shed tears of joy at sight of William. Richard entered soon after, and expressed equal pleasure: as soon as they were seated round the fire, 'William brings great news,' cried Sarah,

‘he has met with a friend, who will not only be the making of him, but of us all.’

Mary clapped her hands for joy, and both brothers eagerly inquired, who it was, and what he could do for them. ‘Nay, nay,’ replied William, smiling, ‘do not expect that I will tell you all this at once ; great, very great offers are made both to me and to each of you ; but there is something to be done on our part and I have made up my mind to do it, though it may at first seem a little difficult, for the gains are very great.’

‘But what sort of work is it,’ said Richard, ‘I would willingly do my best, and labor hard, if the pay is so large, as you seem to say.’

‘The work is far from hard, when you are a little used to it,’ replied William ; ‘but it will take up all your time, and must never be out of your thoughts : for in this business you may, by one day’s neglect, undo all that you have been doing for a month. The greatest difficulty is that of giving up our whole heart and mind to the work ; and our master will accept of nothing less, he cannot be served by halves. I found this a hardship at first, and had now and then violent longings after old habits and pleasures, which he does not allow ; but I struggled hard against these inclinations, and every time I got the better of them, I felt so happy, when the trial was over, that it gave me fresh strength to resist the next temptation ; and my mind is grown so light and so cheerful, by continually thinking of the noble prospects before me, that I would not exchange conditions with the richest squire in the parish : nay, I would rather be the

lowest servant in my master's house, than the greatest lord in the land, if I must forsake him.'

'Well, but, my dear William,' interrupted his mother, 'are you sure, that you can get your brothers and poor Mary into this great family? I fear, as they have never been used to any thing but country business, they will not do for such a gentleman's house!'

'O never fear,' answered he, 'both you and they may be kindly received, if it is not your own fault. Set your whole hearts upon his work, let nothing hinder you for a single hour, in going forward with it, and resolutely give up, whatever he forbids, and depend upon it, he will reward you nobly. What say you, Richard and James? can you resolve to do this, when you are certain that it will make your fortunes?'

'Why to be sure,' replied Richard, 'we should be fools to go on, slaving as we do for bread, and refuse such an offer!'

'But it is no easy matter,' cried James, 'to give up every kind of pleasure—sure he cannot be so hard a master, as never to allow his servants a holiday, or a little rest!'

'His work,' answered William, 'is not of that heavy kind, which requires rest; you feel yourself grow stronger as you go on with it; and, as for recreation, there is none so delightful as following the business, when once you have given your heart to it; he is so good, and kind, and wise, that it is a constant delight to be with him, and live under his eye.'

'Well, my dear brother,' cried Mary, 'I will go with you to this excellent master, and you shall teach me how to please him.'



‘Then you will be the dearest of sisters,’ replied he, ‘and the happiest of women. But can you resolve to give up all your own ways and follow his ways; not merely in appearance but from the bottom of your heart? If you will do this, your master will love you as his own child: and when he has proved your fidelity as long as he thinks proper, will give you a noble inheritance.’

‘But what wages does he give at present?’ cried Richard, ‘from your appearance, I am afraid they are not very large. Your clothes, to be sure, are whole and clean, but you are no better dressed, than if you lived with a common farmer. I always see the servants of the great gentry make a dashing figure, and look like gentlemen themselves; aye, and many of them take as much pleasure as their masters, going to races and all sorts of gay meetings, and spending their money so freely if they happen to step into a public house, that you would think their pockets were full of it’

‘All this is very true,’ said William, ‘but what becomes of one of these dashing gentlemen in the end? He first learns to love drinking, which not only turns him into a brute, but opens the door to every vice, ruins his health, spoils his temper, and consumes his money. Few masters, however bad themselves, will bear long with a drunken servant; so he goes from place to place, never gains a friend or has a shilling before-hand. In consequence of his bad life, loathsome diseases and early old age come upon him, his vicious companions fly from him, and he dies in a hospital or a workhouse!’

‘But this is not always the case,’ interrupted Rich-

ard, 'with young men who love a little liquor : there is Mr. Field of the Crown ; he called in at the Bell last Sunday evening, as he returned from a journey : to be sure, he was not very sober when he came in, and he drank so much gin and water in the little time he stayed, that he could hardly mount his horse to go away, yet, after he was gone, my landlord told us, that he had been one of the luckiest men in the world. It seems, he was footman, and afterwards butler to 'squire Foxley ; and, after living a merry life with him for many years, neither master nor man ever going sober to bed, he married the lady's favorite maid, and set up at the Crown, where he has been living like a gentleman these twenty years. So you see a man may do well in the world, without being remarkably sober.'

'I'll allow,' answered William, 'that we sometimes see bad men appear to prosper, when you look only on the outside ; but I happen to know something of the very person you have been speaking of, which will serve to show you what sort of comfort it is that they enjoy, when all seems to go well with them. I chanced to travel part of my way home with a man, who is his next door neighbor, and as we walked along, he gave me a particular account of him. He married, as you have been saying, twenty years ago, and settled at the Crown, which the 'squire let him have at an easy rent, and he has never since been raised : besides which, both he and his wife had large presents, which, with what they had saved, enabled them to begin with every advantage. The 'squire too has always frequented his house, and recommended him to all his friends, so they have had a great run of business, and might have laid by much money ;

but his old habit still followed him ; he could not keep himself sober, which of course often threw the house into confusion, and would have totally ruined him, had not his wife turned out surprisingly notable, and looked into every thing. But, notwithstanding all she can do, it is well known that they have never put by a shilling, and have heavy debts. But this is not the worst : they have two children, the eldest was a fine handsome young woman, but her parents brought her up in vanity, dressing her like a lady, and having her taught dancing and many other things, which set her above doing any thing useful : she of course grew up saucy and headstrong, was no assistance to her mother in the house, but gave her company to every idle young man who pretended to admire her, hoping by this to draw in some gentleman to marry her. But the end of all that has been, that, about ten months ago, she went off with a recruiting serjeant ; a man, whom her father liked as a drinking companion, but would have scorned as a son-in-law, even if his character had been much better than it is. They are now in a distant part of the kingdom, and she, in consequence of her husband's profligate life, is in great poverty, writing almost every week to her father and mother, and pressing them to send her money, which they cannot spare, without bringing on their own ruin : I leave you to guess what a misery this is to them.'

'Ah dear William,' cried Sarah, 'I sincerely pity the poor man and his wife, faulty as they have been in the management of this thoughtless and ungrateful girl.'

'I pity them too,' replied William, 'but is not this the consequence to be expected from bringing up a

child in vanity and idleness? She was full of nothing but herself, had been taught nothing but to please herself, scarcely knowing that God was in the world! She too often indeed heard his name taken in vain, and blasphemed in her father's house, and even by her father himself; but she never prayed to him, or heard of his power and goodness, except when she went to church; and I believe such as she go there rather to pass an idle hour, to see and be seen, than to improve by what they hear, or make good resolutions, and ask for God's grace to strengthen them. But I have not yet told you all the misery of this man, whom you, dear Richard, thought so-prosperous and happy.

'His son, who was a sensible lively boy, went to a good day school, but in the evenings was suffered to join his father, who never sat down, without the jug and glass before him. At first a sip was given to the child; then half a glass, and by the time he was twelve years old, he had no objection to a half pint. As he was full of life and spirits, the guests grew fond of him, and his foolish parents, vain of the notice he received from several gay young men of fortune, who frequented the house, suffered him to go to cockfights and gambling matches with them, where all that he heard or saw, helped to corrupt his mind. His father, who used to boast, that George could drink more strong liquors than would make many a stout man reel, began at length to perceive that it was growing into an every day business, and that he was likely to be a confirmed drunkard, even before he became a man; that he neglected all learning, grew ill-tempered and overbearing; in short, he was aware, that his son was in the high road to ruin; but, as he

was still young, he flattered himself that something might still be done to save him. With no small difficulty, George was persuaded to separate himself from his dissolute companions: and his father, straining all his credit to raise a sum of money sufficient for the purpose, placed him with an attorney in a distant town. His weak mother, hoping to make him more content with his new situation, sent him small sums of money from time to time, which he regularly spent at a tavern near his master's house, where, at every possible opportunity, he indulged that fatal love of liquor which he had so early acquired. Here he gained a new set of profligate associates; and his expenses so increased, that, unable to supply them by any other means, he robbed his master's desk of several bank notes. This happened about a week ago; my fellow traveller was at the Crown when the letter arrived which brought the fatal news. Field was as usual drunk when he opened it, or he would not have exposed its contents to all about him, and been the first means of proclaiming the infamy of his own son. When you saw him at the Bell, he was returning from a journey, which I fear must be hopeless, to try if he could not prevail upon George's master to stop the prosecution."

"Now judge, my brother, if a drunkard is likely to be a prosperous or a happy man."

Richard seemed a good deal struck by this relation; and they continued to talk upon the same subject, while they ate their frugal meal, and till they parted for the night.

In the morning William was up the first; and having procured proper tools, began to work in the garden, which was in a neglected and unprofitable state:

his brothers went to their usual employments, after he had promised them that when they came home at night, he would tell them more about his plan for their future advancement.

In the course of the day his mother expressed her surprise, that he should go to work so industriously upon a spot, which they were so soon to leave, and still more when she saw him stop a travelling glazier, and give him directions immediately to mend the window: he desired his sister too, to get him some lime from a neighboring farmer's, and borrow a brush, saying, he was resolved to white-wash the whole inside of the house the following day.

"It is a sign, my dear child," said Sarah, "that you have been living in a fine place, by your wanting to do so much for this poor hut; but surely it is lost labor, as we are so soon going away."

"If we leave it," answered William, "it will be more comfortable for whoever comes into it next, and my master has taught me that I ought to love my neighbor as myself."

When the family were assembled at night, William unpacked a small bundle that he had brought with him, which contained an acceptable and useful, though not expensive present, for each of the family: and he gave them in so kind and affectionate a manner, that it more than doubled their value.

They were eager to hear further particulars of what they called the good news, and James declared that, let the difficulties be what they would, William should not go back without him. "But do you well consider, what I told you last night," cried his brother, "that you must have no will but your master's, and give up every pleasure which he disapproves?"

"I think," replied James, "for a time I could resolutely give up any thing, if I was sure afterwards to live as I like."

"Of that then I can positively assure you," returned William; "if you deserve his favor, he will give you more than you can expect, or even hope for."

"But how long," cried Richard, "shall one be in earning this great fortune? will ten or twelve years do it?"

"I cannot exactly tell you that," answered William, "some are a longer, some are a shorter time about it: you must make up your mind to stay till he dismisses you."

"Nay then," cried James, "I may grow old, before he thinks I have done enough, and have no time to enjoy the fortune, I have so hardly gained."

"No, no, my dear brother," replied William, "do not fear that; perform your service to him faithfully; and he will take care to bestow the reward in such good time, that you will have youth and health, and plenty of time to enjoy it in. Do your part, and, be assured, he will not fail in his; and a noble part it will be; for, as poor as you are now, the greatest prince upon earth will have occasion to envy you, if he does not enter into the same service."

"Nay, now you surely must be jesting with us," said his mother; "kings and princes command, instead of serving others. But do seriously tell us all that has happened to you since you left us, and what is your present situation; as often as I have asked you to do this, you have put me off, but yet in such a way, that I cannot be angry with you."

"Aye, do, dear William," cried Mary, fondly embracing him; "I shall have no peace by day nor

sleep at night, till you have explained all these wonders, which so puzzle us."

"Well," said William, smiling, "I will not keep you much longer in suspense: to day is Wednesday; you must rest contented till Saturday evening, when, after the business of the day is over, we will assemble by this fireside, and I will tell you all that you can desire to know. In the mean time, let us all be as busy as we can, that we may truly enjoy the rest of the sabbath, after a week of active industry"

This proposal was agreed to; and in the three following days William contrived to make such a wonderful alteration in their little dwelling, that you would hardly have known it for the same place. He whitewashed every part of the house; had some articles of the furniture mended; and sent for a few necessary things from the neighboring town, which, when Mary and her mother had made every thing perfectly clean, gave it a most comfortable appearance. He also got a man to assist him, in making a neat and substantial fence about the garden, which was in such a state that more than half the crops had been destroyed by the pigs, and even the horses of a farmer who lived near them. His mother and Mary employed all the time they could spare, in clearing away the weeds; after which he told them, he would trench up the ground, that it might the more easily be kept clean during the winter, and in order for putting in the crops at the proper season. He also repaired the bee house, which from neglect was in so ruinous a state, that, during heavy rains, the poor little creatures had been wetted in their straw houses, which had occasioned the loss of several hives.



By the time Saturday evening came, and the family were collected together, after viewing all that had been done in and about the house, as they were seating themselves around the fire, Richard began by telling his brother, that one of the wonders he had to explain was, why he wasted so much money and labor upon a place, they were likely so soon to leave. "That seems strange to me," cried James; "if you go on at this rate, making every thing so neat and comfortable here, we shall feel unwilling to leave it; for it is natural to love the spot, where one was born and bred, and looking as it does now, I should prefer it to many a finer place."

"And I," said Sarah, "have been so happy ever since you came home, that I should rejoice to spend my whole life in the same manner. To be sure we have worked hard, but you have all been so kind and good-tempered, and every thing has so seemed to prosper with us, that labor appears a pleasure. But come, my son, I long to hear all that you have to tell us; this dear, good news, which made my poor heart beat so joyfully, when you first told me of it."

"Well, my dear mother," said William, "I will perform my promise to you all, and begin my account from the time that I left you a year and a half ago. You may remember, that I went with more pleasure because George's cousin was distantly related to us; and I thought, as she had so kindly invited him, she would surely get me into employment; and, after I had seen a little of the country, I intended to return. The weather being fine, and both of us in excellent spirits, we had a pleasant journey, and in the evening of the second day, we by moonlight arrived at a small village, where, after making inquiry, we were direct-

ed to a pretty looking white house with a thatched cover. It was not large, but in all respects of a better appearance than the cottages around it. The door was opened by a middle-aged woman, neatly, though very plainly dressed, and of a mild, agreeable countenance.

“ Upon George’s telling her who he was, and delivering a letter from his mother, he was kindly welcomed, and I more civilly received than I had any right to expect. We approached the kitchen fire, by which sat a grey-headed old man, who appeared quite blind: near him was a small table, with a lamp burning upon it, and a bible open at the place where his daughter had been reading to him. She closed and removed the book on our entrance, and telling her father who was come, he stretched out his hand and heartily welcomed us both. After we had partaken of a comfortable meal, which both stood much in need of, and which was made doubly acceptable by the kind and friendly manner in which it was given, George and his relations made mutual inquiries about each other’s welfare, and what had happened in both families during the many years in which they had neither seen nor heard from each other: and I too gave an account of the great loss we had sustained, by the death of my dear father, and of our present situation. Mrs. Wilmot, who was the chief speaker, did not enter much into particulars respecting herself; but I found that she and her father had been poor, but were now in easy circumstances, owing to a legacy which had lately been left them: I found too, that they intended greatly to befriend George and his family, if they behaved in such a manner as to deserve it.

“Being tired after our journey, we went to bed early, in a room so handsomely furnished, that I almost thought I was got into a gentleman’s house. George was in high spirits at the kind reception he had met with, and the good prospect before him; and we both resolved to go immediately to work, that we might try how we liked the country, without being a burden or expense to our worthy relations.

“The next morning we inquired whether any employment could be had near, and rejoiced to hear that a very rich farmer, who lived within a quarter of a mile, and was accounted an excellent master, in whose family Mrs. Wilmot had lived as a servant many years, would be glad to employ us, as this was a busy time, and she knew he wanted more hands. We then inquired whether we could get decent lodgings in the village; upon which she told George, that she expected him to remain with them for some weeks, and added that if I conducted myself in a sober and regular manner, I might, if I pleased, stay also, till I could provide myself better. I was delighted with this offer, and saying I would pay her whatever she thought right out of my wages, thankfully accepted of it. She soon after went with us to Mr. Wright, who cultivated a fine farm of his own, and another which he rented, amounting together to more than six hundred acres; and he immediately hired us at good wages, and gave particular directions about what we were to do, for his husbandry is of the very best kind. Mrs. Wilmot then returned home to her household affairs and the care of her father, and we took the opportunity of an idle day to

view the country, which was not a little beautified by Mr. Wright's handsome house, and the fine well cultivated fields and tall trees which surrounded it "

" Now, William," cried Mary, " I know this Mr. Wright is the master, who, you say, will do so much for us all: so, I find, he is only a rich farmer, when I thought he had been some lord, or great 'squire at least."

" Well, Mary," said her mother, " and cannot a rich farmer, who has a good estate of his own, employ us, and be as good to us as any lord in the land?"

" That he can, no doubt," returned Richard; "but by what William said, I thought we were at last to have great estates of our own; and the master must be a king, or a duke, to have such things to give away to his servants."

" Well," resumed William, " you will find in the end, that the master whom, I trust, we shall all be proud to serve, is great enough and rich enough to satisfy the utmost wish of our hearts "

" Do go on with your story," cried James, " I want to hear more of the old man and his daughter." William then proceeded as follows.

" George and I walked all round the neighborhood and to the county town, which was not a mile from our home: there we got some dinner, and after viewing every part of it, we returned just as the evening closed, to our friend's hospitable house. We again found a most kind reception; the light cheerful kitchen seemed the abode of cleanliness and comfort; on the round table the tea things were placed, and the coffee-pot ready for boiling by the fire. ' I consider

you as visitors this evening,' said Mrs Wilmot, 'but hereafter you must not expect this treat, except on Saturdays, when the business of the week is over, and on Sunday, which is always a happy day of rest and thankfulness with us.'

"I could not help being delighted to see the dutiful and fond attention which this excellent woman paid to her father, whose helpless condition hardly seemed a misfortune to him, so kindly did she supply every want. After we had talked over all that we had seen in the day, she told us that it was a rule with her father to have a few chapters out of the old or new testament read to him every evening. 'He is but a poor sleeper,' said she, 'and it gives him something both pleasant and profitable to think of, as he lies awake in the night:' and telling us that she had some work that she wished to finish against the next day, she put the bible upon the table, and requested one of us to read.

"George drew back, as not liking the task, but you know I was always fond of my book; and, Oh! what a pleasure and credit was it to me now, that I was able to read tolerably well. I happened to fix upon a chapter in the prophet Isaiah, which contains that remarkable sentence, 'All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' Here Mrs. Wilmot interrupted me, by asking how I understood that passage. I had never been used to think much about what I read, and was quite at a loss for an answer; but at last I blundered out, that I supposed it meant, that nothing which we could do had any merit in the sight of God.

"The sentence," said she, 'is so understood by many, but to me it appears in a very different light:

indeed to interpret it so, would be to contradict all the plainest passages in the scriptures, which tell us in numberless places, that by turning from our iniquities, by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, we must save our souls alive. Nay, our beloved Teacher requires, as the only proof of our love to him, that we should *keep his commandments*. Real righteousness of heart and life, is therefore the only thing, which can recommend us to his heavenly Father. But the righteousness, which the prophet here means, is plainly that outward show of religion, which was then put on by the Jews, and is now, I fear, by too many, who call themselves christians, as a cover for a wicked life.'

"She then asked me, whether I thought, if a man followed evil courses all the week, his going regularly to the public worship on Sundays would be pleasing to God? I answered, that I thought it would only be insulting him. 'You say truly,' said she, 'he who liveth in sin, is dead, while he liveth; his wages is death, and no show of righteousness that he can make is better than filthy rags in the sight of the Just and Holy One, who will reward every man *according to his works*.'

" 'Then there is no use,' said George, 'in a bad man's going to church!'

" 'I am far from saying so,' answered she, 'I wish most sincerely, that all bad men would go where they might have the evil of their ways clearly pointed out to them; I think one who does this every week can hardly fail to mend. But if he still continues the same, doubtless his punishment will be greater; having been better instructed, he will be beaten with more stripes.'

“Though I was not used to this discourse, I could not help being pleased with it; the evening passed swiftly away, and soon after supper, Mrs. Wilmot took a prayer book from the shelf, and said she hoped we could have no objection to join them, in thanking our heavenly Father for the comforts and blessings of the past day, and begging his care and protection while we slept. George looked as if he would rather have gone to bed; but what I had heard in the course of the evening seemed to have prepared my mind for lifting itself up to its Maker. The prayer was short but very solemn, and the earnestness with which she spoke, (for it did not seem like reading, but as if every word came from the bottom of her heart,) together with the uncommon sweetness of her voice, affected me so much, that my eyes filled with tears, and I felt as if I had drawn nearer to God, than I had ever before done in the course of my life.

“When we were gone up stairs, ‘Surely George,’ I cried, ‘we are got into a new world! This family seem in the straight road to heaven, and I should like of all things to join them in their journey.’

“‘You may do as you will,’ answered he, ‘but I like the world I have been used to, aye and its pleasures too, whenever I can get them, notwithstanding all my cousin Margaret’s praying and preaching.’

“‘Well,’ cried I, ‘if religion will always make me feel as happy as I have done this evening, no pleasure, I am sure, can go beyond it.’

“George was sleepy and not disposed to talk, so I said no more to him; but I thought much and seriously in the course of the night, and whenever I dropped asleep, dreamed that I still heard Mrs. Wilmot’s

sweet voice, begging blessings from the Father of Mercy, or reasoning on the happiness of a virtuous course of life.

“Our clothes having arrived the night before by the wagon, we went betimes in the morning to our work at Mr. Wright’s, taking our dinner with us, and returning in the evening to the comfortable fire-side of the old man and his daughter, of whom I became every day more fond. It was not so with George, who would often fall asleep while we were reading, and frequently complained to me, that it was dull: nay, he would have been glad to spend an evening now and then at a public house in the village, but his cousin and uncle spoke so much against it, that he was afraid to disoblige them, and with an ill grace gave it up.

“When Sunday came, we were all dressed and ready for breakfast by eight o’clock, and every thing was so good and in such order, that you would have thought we were people living upon our own estates; and indeed no ’squire’s family could spend Sunday more happily than we did. Let the weather be what it would, we always went twice to town to attend the public worship of God. It was a beautiful sight to see the blind old man, leaning upon his daughter’s arm, for she would suffer no one else to take the care of him: the great neatness and plainness of their dress, and the well-known goodness of Mrs. Wilmot’s character, gained them respect from all who knew them; and the worthy minister, whom they so constantly attended, never failed particularly to notice them: before our coming, they used often to dine at his house on a Sunday, but they now always returned



with us, and though no one ever stayed at home to cook, Mrs. Wilmot always contrived to get us a bit of hot meat and a pudding: every thing that could be wanting was put in readiness the evening before, that no business might interrupt the duties and pleasures of the day. Even George owned, that he had never spent Sunday so agreeably any where else, for our minister was a very fine preacher, and he would not have missed hearing him on any account; yet what he had heard did not seem to have any effect upon his heart and conduct: not that he led a bad life, but he felt no true love for God or his neighbor; he never swore himself, but he heard his companions do so, without telling them that it was wrong; indeed I believe he never felt a wish to make any one wiser or better than they were. I was the same, dear mother, as you well know, till I became acquainted with Mrs. Wilmot, but by reading the bible and conversing with her, and hearing so many excellent sermons, my whole heart seems to have been changed; I feel that I am always in the presence of God, and my greatest delight is, to strive every day, to become more and more like his blessed Son, in whom we see the bright pattern of all that we ought to be. The business of his life was to do good, and we should make it the employment of ours, to benefit our fellow creatures in every possible way, but more especially by instructing them in their duty, for to persuade any one, to lead a holy and virtuous life, is far better than giving him a great estate; the one he must soon leave, and go down into the grave; but the other will ensure his happiness through the endless ages of eternity."

Here poor Sarah burst into tears, and embracing her son, "O William," she cried, "what you have been saying, goes to my heart. If I had been such a woman as Mrs. Wilmot, how different might all my children have been? but I have been ignorant and thoughtless, and was not fit to bring up a family!"

William tenderly soothed her; and while Mary prepared their supper, he talked with his brothers on the happy change which religion had made in all his thoughts, words and actions.

When their meal was over, they all joined in entreating him to go on with his story, which he did in the following manner.

"I had not been many weeks in this family, when one Sunday evening, Mrs. Wilmot being sent for to Mrs. Wright, who was taken suddenly ill, George took the opportunity of her absence to go out also, and I was left alone with the old man, who had before that time expressed a great liking to me, I suppose on account of the pleasure I took in assisting him, whenever it was in my power. He bid me draw my chair close to his, and laying his hand upon my arm, 'William,' said he, 'I want to tell you a little of my past life; while my daughter is at home, I cannot do it, because it is a history of my crimes and her virtues, and she will not suffer me to talk of either before her. She is the best of women, but she will not bear to be praised, thinking all that she can do, too little; and still pressing on to follow her blessed Master, whose cross she is not only willing, but desirous too bear. She was taught from her earliest infancy to worship God, and keep his laws, by her pious mother, whose hard lot it was to be, when very young,

married to one, who had no thought of religion, or of any world but this. I was a carpenter, and accounted a good workman, therefore money came in fast, and I spent it as freely: my dear wife did all she could to make me think, but I would hearken to nothing that was serious; she was so industrious, and so good a manager, that, having only this one child, she required but little of what I gained, to keep to our house in comfort, and give our little Margaret the best schooling the village afforded: we might have laid up a little fortune for her, but I could never be persuaded to put by any thing: all that this excellent woman spared, I spent in public houses. By indulgence I grew more and more devoted to drinking, and cruel monster as I was, doubtless shortened the life of this best of wives. Margaret was about thirteen, at the time of her mother's death, and, grieved as she was, as far as her tender years would permit, endeavored to supply her loss to me. But our house, now that I had lost all that used to restrain me, became often a scene of drunkenness and riot, and this dear child, finding all that she could say to me had no effect, determined to leave a place, unfit indeed for innocence like her's to inhabit

"Your good master, Mr. Wright, was then just married, and the excellent character of her mother, together with her own remarkable modesty and good conduct, induced him to recommend her, young as she was, to his wife as a house-maid. For some time after she left me, I contented myself with having an elderly woman to take care of my house, and then my dear girl came once in every week to see me; but, though she never reproached me, and tried all means as her mother had done before to reclaim me,

I continued devoted to liquor; and, though I could not help loving her, never gave her a single sixpence. She did not indeed want it, for she was as good a servant as she had been a daughter, doing exactly as her mistress directed, never hearkening to bad advisers, and always making her duty the great pleasure of her life.

“ ‘One Sunday, I remember, when she came to see me, I remarked as I had often done before, that, though neat, and always perfectly clean, she was dressed much plainer than the other girls of the village. I asked her the reason of this, and cursing the covetousness of her mistress, threw her half a guinea, and bid her get something a little smart like other people.

“ ‘She never heard me swear without being visibly shocked; the tears came into her eyes, and taking hold of my hand, ‘Dear father,’ said she, ‘may God pardon what he has just heard:’ and then returning me my money, ‘The plainness of my dress,’ said she, is not caused by poverty, but choice; my dear mistress is as kind and generous to me as I can wish, and what is still more, she encourages me to be frugal, offering to take every guinea that I can spare, and pay me interest for it; so that I hope, if the Almighty graciously continues my health, in a few years to have laid by, what will enable me to be a comfort to your latter years.’

“ ‘Here,” continued William, “the tears ran down the old man’s cheeks, and squeezing my hand, ‘You will hate me,’ he cried, ‘for hardening my heart against such an angel of a daughter: but I am now coming to the worst part, to what I shall never think of without the bitterest remorse. The practice of

taken a little time to recover himself, he went on, as near as I can remember, in the following words.

“I lived this wretched life nine years, during which time my daughter still continued at Mr. Wright’s.—She often contrived opportunities of speaking to me, though she never came to my house; indeed, my wife had a violent aversion to her; insulting her, if they met by chance, and abused her in the cruellest manner to all who would give her a hearing: but my dear Margaret’s character was beyond her reach; her excellent conduct had too well established it, to leave a malicious tongue the power of hurting her; and she never was known to say one ill word, in return for all the cruel usage she received. She sometimes, in the most kind and gentle manner, ventured to tell me the consequences to myself of the wicked life I led, and the dreadful example I set to my children, for I had three young ones: but, though I felt the stings of conscience at times, to a degree that almost made me mad, it had no other effect than to make me torment myself and my unhappy wife, who never failed to inflame my passions by the violence of her own. She often swore at me, and I am ashamed to tell you, that I have been so cowardly a wretch as even to strike her.

“‘I have now a matter to relate, which I can never reflect upon without horror and the deepest regret: but I will conceal none of the effects of my vices from you; God knows them all; and to what purpose should I hide them from him? I trust that he has forgiven them too, that my repentance is sincere, and that my heart is wholly changed; that I am, to use our blessed teacher’s own words, ‘Born again, and

become a new creature.' I now hate and abhor all that I used to delight in: and that holiness of heart and life, which was my scorn and jest, is now all the desire and joy of my soul. Surely this is putting off the old and carnal man: and, O my heavenly Father,' added he, clasping his hands together, 'do thou enable me to put on the Lord Jesus day by day. Let me not lose the few remaining hours of my life, but grant that I may devote every one that is left, to purify my heart and affections more and more from that corruption, into which a life of sin had plunged me.'

"After a pause he again went on. 'I have before told you, that I spent many of my evenings at the house, from whence I took my wife. One night, when half drunk, I quarrelled with my companions there, and came home earlier than usual in no very good humor: my wife, as usual, met me with reproaches, and we had a violent quarrel. I threatened to turn her out of doors, and then swore that I would quit the country, and leave her and her children to beg, or go to the workhouse. This so provoked her, that she took up a stool, which happened to be near, and threw it at me; but it was heavy, and, not reaching its mark, fell upon the hip of my eldest boy with such violence, that it injured the bone. This dreadful accident brought us to our senses, though it increased our enmity to each other; for I reproached her in the bitterest terms, for having done the deed, and she as strongly insisted, that all the fault was mine, for having provoked her to it. The child was in great pain; but not knowing how bad he really was, we only got a woman in the village, who was skilful in

curing bruises to come in. She did what she could for him, but he had a wretched night; and while we were consulting in the morning what we should do, for we plainly saw that he was much worse, my dear Margaret passed by the window, and knocked at the door. I would gladly have opened it, but my wife caught my arm, and with savage violence, cried out, 'She shall not come in; if she does I will serve her as I did the boy.' She added oaths, and spoke so loud, that Margaret heard every word, and trembling, retreated from the door. A second struggle would now have arisen between us, and heaven only knows to what lengths we might have gone, had not a neighbor come in, and put a slip of paper into my hand, which contained these words, written by Margaret; 'Dear father, I beseech you to be calm; a surgeon will be with you in half an hour; do not say that I sent him.'

"'Even my hard heart was softened, I went up stairs to my boy, and sitting down by his bed, the first tear which had visited my eyes for many a year, rolled down my cheek. My daughter at that moment seemed an angel to me: but this ray of light which shone on my darkened mind, was soon extinguished by my wife, who thought I had sent for Margaret, to whom she had an aversion, which could only be caused as Cain's hatred to Abel was, by the knowledge that Margaret's deeds were good, while her own were evil. She soon put all right thoughts out of my head, and we went on wrangling till the surgeon came. He is a man of great skill, and by a long and careful attendance, my poor Peter was re-

stored to health, but he will be a cripple for life; the limb which was broken is much shorter than the other, and he will never move again but upon crutches. Indeed, his life must have been lost, had he not been sustained in his long confinement, by the nourishing things which Margaret's kind mistress permitted her to make, and send to him almost every day. As these things came from Mrs. Wright, my wife durst not refuse them, but she often said, she would rather see any child of her's starve, than take a bit of bread from the hand of Margaret.

"I will say no more upon so shocking a subject, but that this excellent creature, with her mistress's assistance, paid the surgeon's bill.

"Well, after this, I still continued to lead the same kind of life, never thinking of God, hating and hated by my wife, careless of my children, for whom, I thought I did all that could be required by working to feed and clothe them, though they grew up untaught, and, from the evil example before their eyes, contracting those bad habits which are the seeds of future vices. But I make my story too long, and will hasten to the end. One thing more I must however tell you of my daughter, to show you how unlike she was to the generality of young women.

"She had many offers of marriage; indeed there never was any one more generally beloved by all who knew her; but she rejected them all, which surprised me a good deal; I thought, however, that it was her concern, not mine, and said nothing to her about it, till a young man who was in a good way of business, came to me to beg that I would speak to my daughter on his behalf. I told him at first that I would have nothing to do in the matter, but upon his



offering me a handsome present if I would bring it about, I promised to speak to her. I accordingly called at Mr. Wright's the next day, and said all that I could to recommend him, telling her that by refusing this offer she would spoil her own fortune, as she could never hope for so good a one again.

“ ‘I will give you her answer, as nearly as I can remember, in her own words.

“ ‘All that you say in commendation of this young man may be true, and I should perhaps have a better prospect in marrying him, than most women have when they enter the state; but I am truly content and comfortable now, and why should I wish for a change? Whoever marries must expect many cares and sorrows, while in my present state I may almost say that I have none. I have now lived with my good master and mistress many years; I love and honor them sincerely; I love their children; I live in a plentiful house, where every thing is provided for me, without any thought of my own. My wages are paid me regularly, and I have had many kind presents for what my mistress is pleased to call my good conduct; so that I have been able to lay up, what is for one like me, a large sum of money. Why should I quit so safe and happy a condition to plunge into the cares and troubles of the world? You say, that this young man loves me so much, that he will be unhappy if I refuse him; but of that I make little account; he has seen and known me too short a time to make it possible that I should be necessary to his comfort. My mistress I know to be my sincere friend; I have rejoiced in her goodness for many years; and she has told me that it would be a real grief to her to part with me. I think too, that I am more useful in this

great family than I could possibly be in a small house of my own: whenever a young servant comes into it, I do her every kind office in my power, show her how to do her work in the manner our mistress requires, and endeavor to cure her of her faults; above all things persuading her to love and serve God. I trust that I have been useful to many in this way, and particularly to the parish apprentices, whom I always take under my especial care; for they are often very ignorant and sometimes ill disposed, but by continued kindness and patience, I have often succeeded in making them steady, good girls.

“ ‘What a happiness it is to me to believe that I have been the means of saving several of my fellow servants from ruin, and turning them from sin and vanity, to serve the living God!

“ ‘Can you wonder, my dear father, that I am unwilling to leave a situation, which I believe to be as happy as any this world can bestow; and what is still much more, by affording me many opportunities of doing good, it prepares me for meeting my Lord at the great day of account, when every one will be judged according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil.’

“ ‘You will perceive, by my recollecting it so well, that what my daughter said, made a strong impression upon me, but I was too proud and obstinate to own it, and said much more to persuade her to the match, asking her why she wished to be so unlike other people?

“ ‘She answered me thus: I do indeed wish in many things to be unlike most other people, for I am firmly resolved by God’s assistance, to follow the pattern set me by my true master, Jesus Christ. He

was always employed in doing good, in turning men from their evil ways, in relieving their wants, and setting them a perfect example of piety and purity. I think of him every hour, and continually ask myself, what *He* would have done in my place. O my father, if you knew how happy this course of life makes me, what a thrill of joy every sacrifice to God's will gives to my heart, you would soon break from all evil habits, and walk with me in the true road, that leads to everlasting life.

“ ‘This dear creature then threw her arms about me, and I felt my heart softened; I returned her embrace, but the next moment recollecting the life which I led, and the sins with which my soul was loaded, I shuddered from head to foot; I felt as if my touch polluted such angel purity, and broke away from her. In my way home, I had many serious thoughts, and half resolved to become a new man; but the first sound of my wife's voice unhinged my weak resolutions, and I finished that very day, by adding to my crimes, another night of darkness.

“ ‘After this, I often thought seriously of what my daughter had said to me from time to time. I well knew that I was in the road to destruction, but I hoped, as I had still a prospect of living many years, that I should repent and make my peace with God before my death. But evil habits gain strength every day; it is easier to reform at five and twenty, than at fifty, for sin hardens the heart; and in this miserable state, resolving to amend, but still putting it off from day to day, I should too surely have gone on, till the short hour of life was passed, and nothing left me but the horrors of a death-bed repentance, had not the Almighty mercifully visited my family with a danger-

ous sickness. My wife fell ill first, and soon after our three children, of a fever, which was then very fatal in the country. As soon as my daughter heard of it, she came to us, and finding her mother-in-law delirious, and one of the children in a dangerous state, she determined at the risk of her life, for the disorder was infectious, to come to us to nurse and tend upon her, who had been her cruellest enemy; thus proving herself a true disciple and follower of him, whose last prayer to God was for the forgiveness of his murderers. She went back to gain the leave of her mistress, and to bring some money and clothes; for she was resolved not to enter Mr. Wright's house again, till our illness was over, one way or the other, lest she should carry the infection with her.

“ ‘Were I to attempt describing the behavior of this excellent creature, I could give you but a faint notion of it. She sent for the same gentleman, who had brought Peter through his illness, telling me she would pay the bill; I had no money beforehand, but she took care that the sick should want for nothing, sending for every thing which the doctor recommended, dressing all their food herself, and giving it in the tenderest manner, sitting up every night, and only taking a few hour's sleep now and then, when I kept watch in her place.

“ ‘All the children were now ill, and in the third week the youngest died in the arms of Margaret, who seemed to feel all the tenderness of a parent for the poor little creature; yet she supported herself with surprising firmness, and, on my expressing a great repugnance to applying to the parish, which I had never yet done, for the funeral; she said, ‘That is a

virtuous spirit, my dear father; while we have any thing of our own, we will not ask for assistance, but should our little stock fail, we will thankfully receive it, and bless God that we live in a country, where such certain relief is provided for those, who are really in want.' So by selling my watch and a few other things that we could spare, (for I would not let Margaret spend her money on that occasion,) the expense was defrayed.

" 'Whenever my wife had an interval of reason, Margaret would kneel down by her bedside, and utter a short prayer, then gently take her hand, and drop tears upon it; but the unhappy woman would turn from her crying, 'No, no, it is too late! God has cast me off!' Then she would groan so dismally, that my soul was filled with horror. If my daughter talked of mercy and forgiveness, she would exclaim, clasping her hands, 'O I have no time to repent!—He snatches me away in the midst of my crimes!' and then fall into such agonies, that we feared again to speak to her, lest it should bring on her last pangs.

"The heavenly conduct of my daughter, and these dreadful scenes at length entirely subdued my stubborn heart; I felt a sincere detestation of my former life, and prayed fervently to God for his powerful assistance, to enable me from that time to become a new creature. My prayers came from a truly penitent and contrite heart, and the Almighty heard them. As a fatal love of liquor had laid the foundation for all my crimes, I firmly resolved never in future to drink any thing but water, with the exception of such cordials as should be necessary for my health, that my old vice might have no opportunity of stealing up-

on me by degrees, which it might have done unawares to myself, if I had not thus secured myself against it. I felt easier, when I had begun to practise this self-denial; I helped my dear child, in all that I was able, felt my mind lightened, by joining in frequent prayer with her: and the delight which she expressed at this change in me, was a cordial to my heart. Our frequent discourse was of the means we should use to turn my poor wife's heart to God, if it should please him to spare her life, and how earnestly we would labor to bring up my remaining children in his ways.

"Things were in this state when the fever attacked me; from which time I can remember little or nothing that happened for several weeks. I was, I believe, as near death, as any one, who recovered, could be, but my angel daughter's unwearied care at length restored me. When I recovered my senses, I seemed to be awakening from a long sleep; the first object that I saw, was my dear child sitting at work by the bedside. I looked round the room; Peter and Ann were by the fire, speaking to each other, but in so low a voice that I could not hear what they said. My eyes wandered about in search of my unhappy wife, but I was not able to speak. The moment my daughter perceived the state that I was in, she hastily dropped her work, and taking my almost lifeless hand between hers, a plentiful shower of tears relieved her full heart. Perceiving that I tried to speak, she begged me to remain silent, and brought me a cordial which the doctor had left with her, foreseeing the state in which I should awake if the Almighty spared my life. After this, she gave me something comfortable and nourishing every hour,

and I gradually gained strength. As soon as she thought it safe, she acquainted me with the death of my wife, which happened soon after I was taken ill, but it was long before she would tell me the particulars of it.

“ ‘O William! is there a scene upon earth so dreadful as the deathbed of the wicked! I will not shock you with the description; but be assured, was there no further punishment to expect in another world, all the sinful pleasures which we could crowd into this life, would not make us amends for those hours of agony, in which they must end. O how thankful was I to God for raising me from the bed of sickness, and by prolonging my days, giving me an opportunity of proving the sincerity of my repentance by a thorough change of conduct. My thoughts by day and my dreams at night, were full of plans of industry and piety for my future life.

“ ‘I hoped by continual labor and hard living to be able to bring up my two dear children, who were now perfectly recovered, and to repay my generous Margaret the money which she had freely bestowed upon us in our time of need, which amounted to nearly thirty pounds, the whole savings of her virtuous life, which she had cheerfully laid out, in providing all, that was wanting in our long illness, and in burying my poor wife; nor would this have been sufficient, but for the kindness of Mr. Wright, who paid the doctor’s bill, and that of his good lady, who supplied us with linen and many other things, which we could hardly have procured.

“ ‘When all danger of infection was over, Mrs. Wright came herself to see us, and expressed great

impatience for Margaret's return to her place: but alas! as I grew better in other respects, the disorder settled in my eyes: at first, they inflamed, and gave me great pain, but after a time the humor seemed to dry up, and the pain gradually left me, but my sight went with it, and by degrees I became totally blind. When I first began to foresee this misfortune, it was a great shock to me, not so much on account of the sorrow I felt, in losing so precious a sense, as because it must put an end to all the plans of labour by which I had hoped to make some amends for the many years that I had lost. When I spoke of this to my dear child, she laid balm upon my wounded heart: 'Be comforted, my dear father,' said she, 'put your trust in God, and be certain that this great affliction comes in mercy and for our good. Let us humble ourselves under his chastening hand, and thankfully receive all that he thinks fit to send. This is a life of trial, in which our gracious Father gives us an opportunity to fit ourselves for his kingdom of glory: even our blessed Master was 'made perfect by suffering;' 'He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;' and if we would be his disciples, we must willingly 'Take up the cross and follow him.'

" 'I cannot describe to you the comfort which these words gave me; I thought of them over and over, and ceasing to lament, I bowed in thankfulness to God for all my afflictions. I felt the happy change, which they had wrought in me; the foolish and sinful pride which I had nourished in all my former life left me. I was contented with the prospect of spending the remainder of my days in a workhouse, where I knew my daughter would often visit me, and I



hoped even there, by the gentleness of my behavior, to do some good, for I now wished well to all my fellow creatures, and even thought I might be useful to those who would hearken to me, by warning them from evil, and persuading them to good.

“ ‘I mentioned these plans to Margaret, and proposed taking the children with me till they were able to work. ‘Now I see,’ said she, tenderly embracing me, and dropping a tear upon my cheek, ‘Now I see that you are a sincere christain: you will willingly submit to whatever God sees best, and wherever you go, you will be employed in doing all the good you can to his creatures. But O, my dear father, can I go back to my happy home at Mr. Wright’s, and leave you and your children? No, no; I have youth and health, and I will labour for your support; we have no debts, and I have still a little money left. My dear mistress, who knows what I intend, has already furnished me with work, and by her means I do not doubt of a constant supply, for she has spoken to several friends on my behalf, and also kindly promised to employ Ann in picking stones, weeding the garden, and any other work that she is able to do. As for poor Peter he will be a companion to you, when I am obliged to be absent; and I trust God will enable us in a few years, to put him into a way to get his bread.’

“ ‘You may guess how much I was affected by all this; to spend the remainder of my life under the care of my dear daughter, to be fed by her dear hand, and continually hear her sweet voice uttering words of joy and comfort, seemed too great a happiness; more than I deserved, more than I could bear. I there-

fore reasoned and argued with her against the plan; I grieved, that she should give up a life of ease and comfort, and submit to close confinement and hard fare: but she kept steady to her purpose, and though several excellent offers of marriage could not tempt her to give up her happy and useful station at Mr. Wright's, she cheerfully left all, to be the support of her blind father and his helpless children." "

Here William was interrupted by his sister, bursting into tears, and earnestly exclaiming, "I did not think there had been such a woman in the world! I never thought any body could be so good! O, if I could but be like her."

"And why can you not?" said William, "resolve to follow *her Master*, to copy his bright example in every action of your life; and we shall see in you another Margaret Wilmot. How dearly shall I love my sister, and how precious will you be to us all, if you steadily do this!"

"Indeed," cried James, "I believe you will cause a great change in us all; I see things in quite a different light from what I ever did before; I feel as if serving God ought to be the chief business of life, and that nothing else can make a man happy."

"And I," said Richard, "have heard enough of public houses; I will make no hasty promises, but I think I would far rather join the blind old man in drinking water, than again make the brute of myself, that I have too often done of late. But do proceed with your story, I would sit up all night to hear you."

William, highly gratified, went on, still relating in the old man's words.

"My dear girl worked hard, and lived hard to

maintain us; and I, who could do nothing to assist her, who had cruelly neglected her for years, was the chief object of her care and tenderness. Often would she repeat texts out of the scriptures, and sing sweet psalms and hymns to me, as she sat at work: we prayed together with the children every night, and on Sundays I went leaning on her arm, and poor Peter supported by Ann and a crutch, twice to the public worship of God in town, where our minister, who is one of the best and most pious of men, soon took notice of us, and in bad weather often kept us at his house to dinner, gave Margaret many valuable books, and several to the children to help them in their learning: and, indeed, he has been the best of friends to us ever since. The sabbath was a day of delight to me, for besides the two excellent sermons which I heard, my dear daughter had then time to read them to me; and I carefully treasured up what I heard, to think of it all the week. Busy as she was, Margaret never failed to teach the children one lesson each every day, and here I had the happiness to be able to give some assistance. Peter came on surprisingly, and both, under our steady and gentle management, improved daily, and gradually got the better of all the bad habits, which alas, had taken hold of them from the time that they were able to imitate the evil example set them by myself and their unhappy mother. O how thankful was I to God for the change in my own heart, which enabled me not only to work out my own salvation, but, by continually sitting before these dear children the goodness of our heavenly Father, in sending his beloved Son to show us the path of life, and impressing on their ten-

der minds the delights of that happy dwelling, to which it leads, to teach them early to fix their affections on that world, whither our Lord is already gone. How would their young hearts beat with pleasure, when I talked to them of the time, when Jesus, our blessed teacher, will come in the glory of his Father, to call us from our graves; and how eagerly have they asked me how soon I thought they should die, and this happy time come!

“ ‘In a little time Peter was able to read so well that, while Ann began to help her sister at work, he instructed us in the word of God. Then began the happiest days of my life; we strove to do our duty here, while our hearts were fixed upon heaven; and we each of us looked forward to the day of our death as the beginning of our happiness.

“ ‘Do not suppose from this, that I forgot to think often of my former sinful life! O no; never shall I cease bitterly to lament the evil use I made of so many precious years, graciously lent to me for a very different purpose: but I look back, though with deep regret, yet I thank my God, without terror: for he hath told us by his holy prophet, that ‘ If the wicked man turn from his evil ways, he shall save his soul alive.’ My heart, which was corrupt and grovelling, now lifts itself up with joy to Him who made it. For my blindness I am thankful to him, for it turns my thoughts inward: for the pains and infirmities of age I thank him, for they exercise my patience, and remind me every hour that my departure from this world draws near. Yes, my dear William, were he even to take my prop, my support, my darling daughter from me, I would still bless and adore his mercy,

knowing that his goodness will soon bring us together, in the glorious realms of everlasting day.'

"Here the old man stopped: I was greatly affected, but begged him to go on, lest Mrs. Wilmot's return should prevent his finishing the account that day.

" 'I have little more to add,' he continued; 'we lived just in the manner I have described nearly seven years; my dear daughter working hard for our maintenance, and living herself upon the coarsest fare: many times have I found, by questioning the children, that she has prepared a comfortable dish of coffee, or basin of broth for me, while she tasted of neither herself; and she taught this self-denying spirit to her children: when I have earnestly begged that we might all fare alike, even Peter and Ann would answer, 'No, dear father, the plainest fare is pleasant to us; we are young and healthy; and it would be a shame for us to pamper ourselves with niceties; but if we live to be old or sickly, some kind friend will prepare good things for us, as Margaret now does for you.'

" 'Think how all this affected me, and what reason I had to be thankful to God, for giving me such children for the support of my latter years.

"About the time I now speak of, when Ann was in her thirteenth, and Peter in his twelfth year, an aunt of Mr. Wright's, who was lately become a widow, came to his house. She was a worthy woman, but what is generally called ill-tempered: on this account she had lived on bad terms with her husband, and used to spend a good deal of her time at Mr. Wright's, while my daughter was there. No one of the servants besides Margaret could please her; but she pitied this infirmity, which rendered the poor lady

more unhappy herself, than it could any one else, and made it her study to oblige her, which the sweet gentleness of her own disposition made easier to her, than it would have been to almost any other person; and Mrs. Martin on this account became very fond of her. She had been for some years in a distant part of the kingdom with her husband, but now, upon his death, was come, with the intention of spending the remainder of her days at Mr. Wright's, where, she said, she had always found herself happier than in any other place.

“ ‘She sent for Margaret soon after her coming, and lamented her having left the family, saying, that her chief object in coming there, was to have the comfort of her attendance, which now, that her health was declining, became more desirable than ever to her. She found, however, that my daughter's time was so fully occupied in her work, her care of me, and instructing the children, that she could see but very little of her. Of this she complained to Mr. Wright, who was so anxious to make her comfortable, that he proposed to her to build a parlor and a bed room in addition to our house, which she might furnish in what manner she thought proper, and taking a servant to do the under work, Margaret might spend most of her time in attending upon her.

“ ‘She joyfully embraced the proposal, and sent for my daughter to speak to her upon the subject. This kind and dutiful child would agree to nothing without consulting me. I rejoiced, you may be sure, at the prospect of lightening her labors, for I often feared her constant confinement and close attention to needle-work would be hurtful to her health: I therefore looked upon this proposal as a means sent

by our gracious Father for her relief, and most thankfully accepted of it.

“ ‘Margaret, however, begged leave to alter the plan in one respect; she did not wish to have a servant, knowing that Ann was now able to do every thing that would be wanting, under her direction.

“ ‘Well, in a few months, the building was finished, the rooms furnished, and Mrs. Martin took possession of them. She added many things, which were now become necessary to our little stock of furniture, and as Margaret studied to please her in every respect, she often told us that it was the most comfortable part of her life. She would indeed at times be very unreasonable, but my daughter taught Ann always to answer her gently and submissively; and, by owning the truth on all occasions, when any thing amiss had happened, she gained the lady’s good opinion, and had many kind presents from her.

“ ‘But what Peter gained from her was still more valuable; she was often so good as to take him for an hour or two together into the parlor, to instruct him in writing and accounts. To be sure it was not every child, who could have profited by her kindness; for, if he was in the least inattentive, or even dull, she would angrily send him away, and take no further notice of him for an hour or two. But the good lessons of Margaret had such an effect upon him, that he took all her rebukes meekly, and did his utmost to oblige her. I cannot help thinking, that the bad temper of this poor lady has been of great service to these dear children; for it taught them early to curb their own, and by habit it became so easy, that, instead of being disposed to be passionate or saucy, when she was unreasonable, they pitied her, and tried

by every gentle means to bring her to herself again.

“ ‘This disposition, which my dear daughter so beautifully exemplified in her daily conduct, is surely that meek and humble spirit which our beloved Lord enforced, as necessary to every follower of his, and to the practice of which, he has promised a degree even of worldly prosperity, ‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.’ And we see this promise daily fulfilled; for, while violent, passionate, and revengeful people are wretched in their own minds, and make themselves enemies, wherever they go; the kind and gentle gain friends, who help them in difficulties, and rejoice with them, when they are prosperous.

“ ‘I can say from experience, that I never knew what real comfort was, till I got rid of all angry passions, and, by endeavouring to conform myself to the likeness of him, who was ‘Meek and lowly in heart,’ I have indeed found true rest unto my soul.

“ ‘We were now got into such comfortable circumstances, that Margaret began again to save money; Mrs. Martin entirely provided for the house; and, as my daughter still took in a good deal of work, and neither she nor Ann ever spent a shilling in vanity, or an hour in idleness, it was not long before she got a little sum together, and began to consult with me about putting Peter to a trade in which his lameness would be no hindrance to him. She thought of a tailor or a shoemaker, but when we talked to him about it, he expressed such a love of learning, and his books, and indeed had made such a progress in them, that, after much thinking and consulting Mrs. Martin, we made him quite happy, by agreeing that he should be brought up for a schoolmaster. As soon as this was



fixed, he was sent to a very good school in town, whither he walked every morning with the help of his crutches, taking his dinner with him, and returning at night. At the end of the year, his master offered him his board and a small present, if he would assist him in teaching; a proposal, which you may be sure we gladly agreed to; he raised his present to five guineas the next year, and on those terms still improving himself, he continued with him till last Christmas, when he had an offer made him from the master of a very large school in the next county, of his acquaintance and twenty guineas a year. He had an excellent character from his old master, who rejoiced at his advancement, saying he deserved a better salary than he could afford to give them.

“ ‘We have twice heard from him since he went, and he is delighted with his new situation, where he has already begun to gain friends, and hopes soon to send home a little sum of money for Margaret to keep for him till he can save more and put it out to interest. O! William, how has the Almighty showered down blessings upon me, since I turned my heart to him! When Peter was made a cripple for life, who could have thought of his being such a happy youth, and such a comfort to his family! but thus it is that our kind Father brings good out of evil; nothing indeed can be evil to those who love him, for afflictions are only trials of that love, and those who receive them thankfully, as such, shall come out like gold, purified by the fire

“ ‘For nine years did we live in the happy manner I have been describing, when it pleased God to take our good friend Mrs. Martin to himself: her illness was short, and she had every comfort in it, which this

world could bestow. Mrs. Wright and my daughter were constantly with her, and she many times thanked Margaret for the manner in which she had borne with a temper, which she was now fully sensible might and ought to have been got the better of; and putting her will into Mr. Wright's hand, she said, 'You will find here, that I have tried to make this excellent woman some amends for the pains she has taken to make the latter years of my life comfortable.

" 'Her death, which happened a few hours after, threw us into real affliction, for she was a worthy woman, and we all loved her. The day after the funeral, my daughter was sent for to Mr. Wright's, to be present at the opening of the will, when to her great surprise, she found that she had a legacy of five hundred pounds, besides all the valuable furniture of the house, and her clothes, watch, and whatever else belonged to her here.

" 'Poor Margaret was quite overpowered by this generosity; she would have fainted, had not a violent burst of tears come to relieve her full heart. As soon as she was able to speak, 'O it is too much, too much,' said she, 'my dear departed mistress has made me unhappy by the excess of her goodness!' Mr and Mrs. Wright comforted her in the kindest manner, and assuring her, that they were perfectly pleased and satisfied with what their aunt had done, bid her look upon it as a bounty sent by God to enable her to make her blind father happy in the end of his days.

" 'In short, they behaved as the best of friends, and immediately paid her the whole sum, without even deducting the legacy tax. My dear girl was as

generous hearted as they, and would not be satisfied till Mrs. Wright consented to accept of the gold watch, some rings, and a few of the best clothes: out of the rest, she completely fitted out Ann for service, and our worthy minister's wife recommended her to a place. She is now with her mistress in London, and we have every reason to hope, from her letters, that she is firmly resolved to follow Margaret's example, and be constantly upon her guard against the many temptations which surround an innocent young woman in a large family of servants.

“ ‘And now, dear William,’ continued the good old man, ‘I shall have finished my story, when I have told you that the five hundred pounds is put out to interest, and my dear daughter continues as attentive as ever to her daily work, except that she now allows herself time to read to me in an evening; and, when the weather is fine, she often makes me lean upon her arm, to enjoy the warm sunshine in the garden. She has now the power too to help her poor neighbors, with more than her prayers and good advice, and never fails to visit the sick with food and medicines, the afflicted with kind consolation; zealously endeavoring to turn the hearts of all to Him, who is the only sure refuge in time of trouble.

“ ‘Soon after she came into possession of this money, she told me she was resolved to write to the mother of George, who was half sister to my first dear wife, and for whom Margaret had often heard her express a great regard; and I believe it is her intention, if they are deserving of it, to divide what she dies possessed of, between that family and my two

children, who already owe her much more than riches could make them amends for the loss of; for she has taught them so firmly to fix their hopes upon a better world, that I trust no temptation, which this can offer, will ever entice them from that straight and narrow path which leads to everlasting life.' ”

Here William finished relating the old man's story, but went on with his account in the following manner. “I was so struck with all which I had just heard, that I could think of nothing else for many days and nights I talked much of it to George, and thinking it would make a deeper impression upon him, got Mr. Wilmot to repeat it to him, the very first time he had an opportunity by his daughter's absence. He was at the time a good deal affected by it, and I thought he afterwards paid more attention to what Mrs. Wilmot said: but I know not, whether from the hardness or the giddiness of his disposition, nothing that he hears seems to reach his heart: he agrees that, what you say is good and right, but the moment he gets amongst those, who have no religion, you can scarcely see any difference between him and them, and you would not think he had ever read a good book, or heard a good sermon in his life.

“Soon after this time, a respectable old lady, with a niece, who waited upon her, came to lodge at Mrs. Wilmot's; so George and I were unwillingly obliged to agree for a room in a house hard by: but we still continued to spend every evening,\* and the whole of Sunday, with the excellent old man and his daughter, for whom I at this moment feel all the tender affection, which the best of fathers and of sisters could claim from me.”

At this moment, Sarah, rising up, suddenly caught hold of William's hand and bursting into tears, "I now see my dear son," cried she, "what you meant by the new master, whom we were all to serve! God is that great and noble master, who makes such offers to us all. And, O my children, let us instantly resolve to accept them! let our little family at least, withdraw itself from the vices and vanities of the world, and devote our lives to his service!" "I do, I do," cried Mary, throwing herself into her mother's arms; Richard and James arose, and giving each a hand to William, were too much affected to speak. He embraced them both and falling on his knees, all the rest following his example.

"O merciful Father," he cried, "look down upon us with favor; strengthen and confirm in our hearts the resolutions which we now make to give ourselves to thee. Let us be of that happy number, who choose the Lord for their God, and make it the business of their lives to obey his laws. O let us not fall back into carelessness and sin, but may we bear in mind through every future day and hour, the glorious purpose for which we were made: that we are citizens of an heavenly country, and waiting for that blessed call which will conduct us through the gates of death to those happy mansions, where our blessed teacher Jesus Christ, is now preparing to receive his true followers. And, O, Almighty God, bestow upon us a portion of that holy spirit, which thou gavest to good men in old times, to the Apostles of the blessed Jesus and to Jesus himself without measure; that our affections may be raised above this present world, and we may be able at all times steadily to resist its tempta-

tions. So shall we be of that little flock, to whom it is thy good pleasure to give the kingdom."

After a pause of some moments, they all arose, and William, with a countenance beaming with pleasure, said, "I cannot express how happy you have made me by your acceptance of the great offers which I returned home on purpose to make known to you!"

"They were glad tidings indeed, that you brought us, my son," cried Sarah, "I had often read in the bible, and heard many sermons, but I read and heard like a child, without ever reflecting upon it afterwards: till now, I never knew what religion was; I feel that it changes every thought of the heart. All the follies and vanities of the world seem now as nothing to me: I have but one wish, and that is to gain the favor of God. Tell me, my dear children, do you feel this change in yourselves?"

"I hope and trust that I do," replied Richard, "but I fear to say, lest my old thoughts and inclinations should return, which would make me miserable: for I am well convinced by all that William has said, and what my own heart tells me, that there is no true happiness but in serving God."

"You have spoken just what I think," said James, "and I will struggle hard against falling back to what I have been. I have freely chosen my master and I hope steadily to obey him."

"Do but that, my brothers," cried William, "while this short life, which we may call our day of work, continues, and then we shall all be called to our master's glorious home, where we shall be received, not

as servants, but as children, 'heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,' to inherit with him, each in proportion to his desert, the rewards of the heavenly kingdom. Come, my sister," continued he, I trust that you will be one of the first in this glorious race; are you prepared to cast away all follies and vanities, and to press forward towards the mark?"

"It shall be the business of my life," replied she, "to imitate that best of women, of whom you have been telling us; I will go to the first creditable place that I can hear of, and do my utmost to behave exactly as she did at Mrs. Wrights. If God blesses me with health I shall gain friends, and put by money to help you, dear mother, in sickness and old age: the great pleasure of my life shall be doing my duty, and coming home now and then to learn it better and better, by talking to my dear William "

So happy was this little family, and so delighted with their new plan of life, that they hardly knew how to part for the night; but as it grew late, William took a book from his pocket, in which Mrs. Wilmot had written a number of excellent prayers; they all kneeled down, and besought God to strengthen their good resolutions; after which, they retired to that sweet repose, which is reserved for those who trust in an all-powerful and ever wakeful protector.

The next morning they met in the same happy temper, that they had parted the night before. William had desired his mother to prepare coffee for breakfast, because it was a rule to have it on a Sunday at Mrs. Wilmot's. They were all nearly dressed, but Mary surprised them by wearing an old bonnet;

while a very showy one, which she had bought a few weeks before, was in her hand. "Rejoice with me, my brother," said she, "for I am really changed; last Sunday I was delighted with this gay bonnet, and proud to wear it, but when I put it on this morning, I was displeased with its finery; I felt sure that Mrs. Wilmot at my age would not have worn it, nor will I again, till it is made up in a manner better suited to my present liking."

"How much shall I love you, my dear sister," said William, "if you go on as you have begun! a young woman who can root out vanity from her heart, has taken away one of the greatest temptations to evil."

They reached the neighboring town in good time for morning service, and all, except William, who had often felt it before, were surprised at the effect which the prayers and sermon had upon their hearts. They had often heard the same minister, but were never before in so proper a state of mind to be edified by what he said: they talked of it all the way home, and as soon as dinner was over, were impatient to set out again that they might renew the same delightful feelings.

While Mary was preparing their coffee in the evening, an old companion of Richard's came in to ask him if he would come for an hour to the Bell, where two or three of their friends were just gone to spend a cheerful evening.

"No," answered Richard, "I never intend spending another sixpence in a public house; and of all evenings, Sunday is the last that I would choose for the purpose."



"Heigh-day! why, what's the matter now?" said Tom, "you were but this day seven-night, as merry as the best of us; and pray, what has got into your wise head that you cannot come to-day?"

"Why, I am very much changed, I hope, since that time," replied Richard, "I have been twice to day publicly praying to God to forgive my past sins, and enable me to lead a better life in future, and I will not finish the day by adding to their number."

"Come, Thomas," said William, "sit down and spend a sober hour with us"

"Not I, i'faith," returned he, "you shall never make a canting milksop of me; so good bye, Dick, we shall have good fun in talking of thee at the Bell to-night."

"With all my heart," replied Richard, "you may tell all who are there that I am become a christian, and by God's assistance, I hope in future to behave something like one."

On this Thomas burst into a loud laugh, and again telling him what diversion it would make at the Bell, left them.

"How glad I am that he is gone," cried Mary, "why did you ask him to come in, it would have spoiled our happy evening."

"I asked him," answered William, "because we ought to try all means to prevent others from doing what is wrong; and, if he had sat down with us, he might have heard something that would be useful to him. But," turning to Richard, "you have acted nobly, my dear brother, many young men are prevented from doing right by the fear of being laughed at, unmindful of what is said by our blessed Teacher,

'Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father!' But you have shown a courage which delights my heart. Do you, James, but follow his example, and we shall be the happiest family in the world."

"Do not doubt but I will," replied James, "I am proud of the service that I have entered into, and I wish all who know me to know who is my master."

"You are right," said William, "if bad men make a jest of us, we will pity and endeavor to convert them. We must expect that the profligate will persecute us for a time, and especially that our old companions will try to make us ashamed of being like nobody else, as they will call it; 'If we were of the world, the world would love its own,' but as we are determined to pursue steadily the straight road which leads to life, regardless of the difficulties, or the derision that we may meet in our way, the bad part of it will envy and hate us. But instead of fearing, let us covet this noble distinction! let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, remembering the glorious reward which is annexed to it, 'Happy are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'"

"O William," cried Sarah, "what a happy mother you have made me! well might you say, that you have brought home good news! But now that you all have delighted my heart, by the pious resolutions you have made, let me tell you that I intend not only to worship God from my heart, which I can hardly say that I ever did till last night, but to be much more useful and comfortable to my dear children than I have ever yet been. Our house shall be as clean as

Mrs. Wilmot's, and I will endeavor to be as kind and industrious, though I can never be as good and wise as she is. I, like her poor father, have lost much precious time in my past life; but I also will make all the amends in my power by diligently employing every hour that is left."

"Dear, dear mother," said William, "your happiness shall be the study of our lives. I have a proposal to make, which I hope all here will gladly agree to; and this is, that we three brothers each put a shilling a week into a box for ourselves, and sixpence for you: Mary, who will not get as much wages as we, may put half as much. When there is ten pounds in the box, it may be put out to interest, which will add ten shillings a year to the stock. I intend that each of us when he marries, shall take his own share, but leave his mother's, which is to be entirely her own, to do what she pleases with; and if she lives to see us all married, it will enable her to live with which of us she pleases, and we shall feel the delight of having made a provision for the latter years of that dear parent, who toiled for us when we were able to do nothing for ourselves. I am now twenty-three, and am fully resolved not to marry till I am thirty; by which time my own share from the box will be more than twenty pounds; this will buy furniture for a house, and as I hope to meet with a prudent young woman, who will also have saved something, we shall have a little bank to begin with. If you will agree to do the same, what comfortable prospects shall we have before us, even in this world, besides our glorious expectations in the next."

"I agree to it most heartily," said Richard, "and as I shall go no more to the Bell, I am sure I shall be able to save more than eighteen-pence a week; twice as much is soon gone in a public house."

"And when we are at task work," cried James, "we can easily spare another shilling; besides, there is harvest time, when, if we agree with our master for a moderate quantity of liquor, which I am resolved always to do, our gains in money will be very great."

"And I," said Mary, "hope to be as good a servant, as dear and useful to my mistress as Mrs. Wilmot was, and you remember how much she saved, while she was at Mr. Wrights."

"O my dear children," said Sarah, with her eyes full of tears, "you overpower me with your goodness: all that I can say is, that I will do my best to assist you; I will spin for your linen, and knit your stockings, and I will continually pray to the Almighty to bless and reward you, for your great kindness to me."

They were all very much affected, and William replied, "Whatever we do for you, dear mother, will be a happiness to ourselves. I have no doubt," said he to his brothers, "that if God grant us health we shall be able to put by more than the sum I mentioned, for the harvest, to sober men, is a very profitable time, and, by taking task work, we may sometimes gain a great deal; so, if at any time we have a crown, or half-a-guinea a-piece that we can spare, we may agree and put it together into the box: but I propose this eighteen pence a week as a regular thing, never to be broken into, unless our great Master thinks proper to send sickness or any other calamity that we

cannot prevent; in which case, the money that is wanting, shall be taken from our little store as freely as the good Margaret's was, when her father and his family were in distress, and must have been lost without her help.

"And O my mother, my brothers, and my sisters," continued he, "how happy shall we all be, if we keep steadily to the resolutions we have made to day! the blessing of the Almighty will be upon us, and upon all that we have: our house will be founded upon a rock, and no storms can ever shake it. Our minds will rest securely, knowing that we have chosen the good part, which cannot be taken away from us. Whatever troubles may befall us in this world, our thoughts, our hopes and wishes will be so firmly fixed upon the next, that no sorrow of heart can reach us. We shall look forward, like the old man and his daughter, to the hour of our death, as the happy end of labors and trials: it has no terrors to those who hate sin: no it is the gate through which they pass to heaven. No earthly master can make us any offers worthy to be compared with those which we glory in accepting; for if we had all the riches this world can bestow, we must, in a few years, grow old, die, and leave it: but in recompence for the steady obedience of a life, which may be very short, and cannot be long, we are promised a 'Crown of glory, which fadeth not away,' a dwelling place with Him, in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

The writer of this history would fain hope that many, who are in similar situations with William

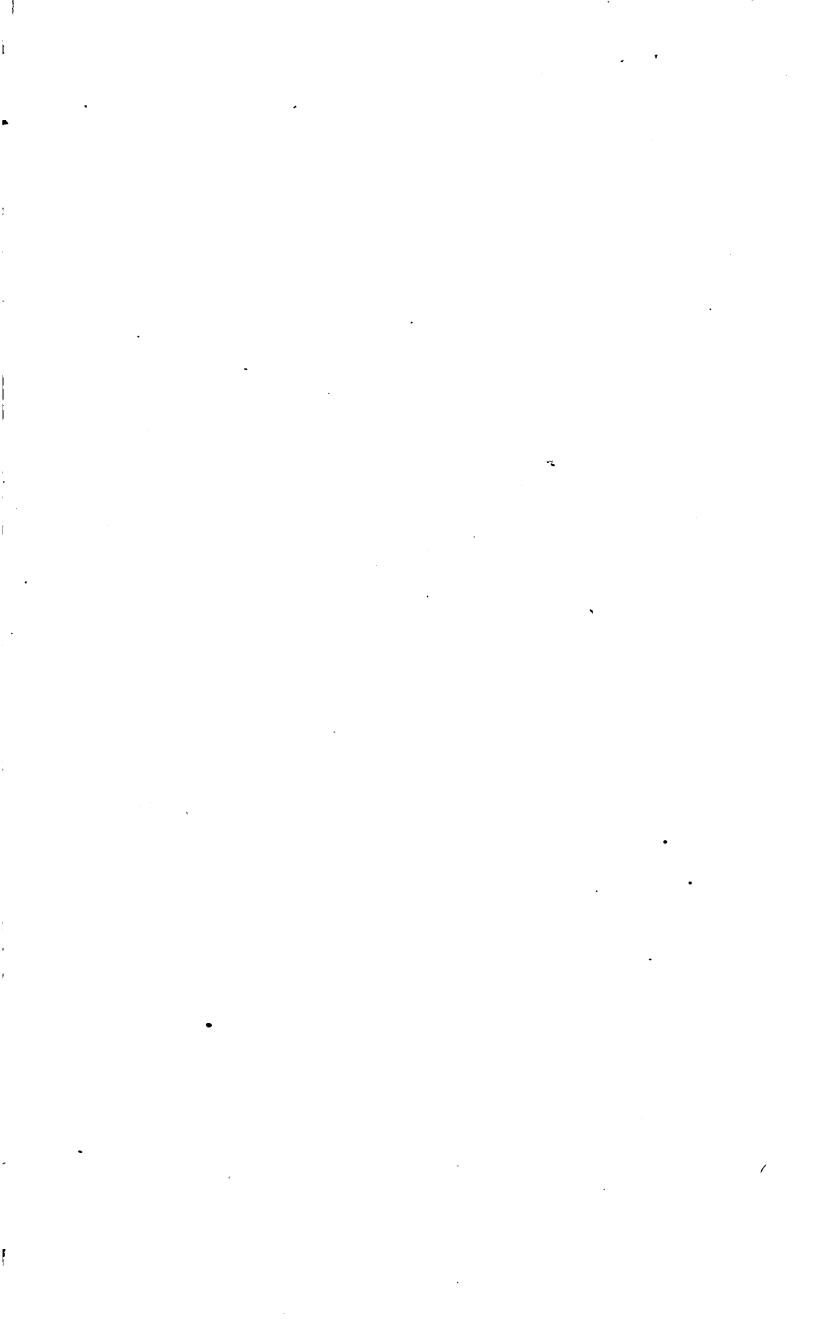
Seymour and his family, will by reading it, be induced to enter into the same service, and make the same happy choice that they did. Their great Master makes the same glorious offers to all; and it is strange that there should be found amongst us, any one so mad and foolish as to reject them; yet I grieve to say it, there are many such: many, who prefer the low servitude of a life of sin, with its wages of misery and death, to an honorable and delightful obedience to the commands of an all-gracious Father, who will reward the service of a short life sincerely devoted to him, with perfect and never-ending felicity.

Surely no young man would wish to imitate the early part of Mr. Wilmot's life, when he sees to what shame and wretchedness it brought him, even in this world, and hears from his own confession, that he was a thousand times happier when old and blind, and maintained by the labor of his daughter, than he had ever been in the days of his youth and health, when the world prospered with him, and he had all the means of comfort in his own power! But he was then the slave of his own wicked passions; and in such a state, a man must be miserable, though all the wealth of the world was at his command.

I hardly need ask any young woman, which she would wish to resemble, Mr. Wilmot's second wife, whose boldness, vanity, violence, and vicious conduct must have made her hateful to every reader; or his modest, humble, gentle and pious daughter; who must be the delight of every feeling heart, and whose example will, I trust, be the means of leading many, into the happy paths of peace and righteousness. Can there be a woman, who would not desire to be

like her? If there be, I give her solemn warning that her heart is bad, and call upon her instantly to repent, and reform, if she would save her soul.

Before I conclude, let me earnestly entreat all my readers to think seriously of the condition that they are in: to ask themselves, whether they are the true and faithful servants of God; whether it is the great object of their lives to do his work, or whether they are going thoughtlessly on, looking only to the mean pleasures, and paltry advantages of the present day, and making no serious and regular preparation for that awful hour, to which we are all hastening, when 'the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised' to a never-ending life!!! O that I could rouse all, who are in this state of stupid carelessness, to a sense of their real condition! that they would be persuaded to think less of those things which are passing away, and more of what will endure to all eternity! That they would make it the business of this life, to fit themselves for the enjoyment of that happy home, which the Almighty hath prepared for those who love him: that by a 'patient continuance in well doing,' while they dwell upon earth, they would secure to themselves an everlasting inheritance in those happy mansions, where 'There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; for God himself, even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall wipe away the tears from every eye.'







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